

REMARKS

In the Office Action of 04/30/2003, the Examiner required corrected drawings. A set of new drawings is enclosed.

Claims 12-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Examiner also indicated that claims 16 and 17 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the §112 rejection of the base claim, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The examiner is requested to reconsider this rejection.

Claims 12, 16 and 17 have been amended. Claim 12 recites that the "inner housings are adapted to be inserted into the at least one passage." It is considered that amendment to claim 12 precisely defines present structural attributes of interrelated component parts, and clearly provides patentable weight to the limitation questioned by the Examiner. Claims 16 and 17 have been rewritten, as indicated by the Examiner, to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 16 and 17 are considered to be allowable as now presented.

The Examiner allowed claims 18-23. Claims 3, 8, 25 and 26 were objected to as depending upon a rejected based claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 3 and 8 have been converted into independent form. These claims have not been narrowed or limited by these amendments. In view of section 10 of the Office Action, claims 3 and 8

should now be in condition for allowance. Claims 25 and 26 are discussed further herein.

Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9-10 were rejected under §102(b) as being anticipated by Taira et al. Claims 12-15 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Zimmel. Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Taira et al in view of Abendschein. The examiner is requested to reconsider these rejections.

Claim 1 claims, among other things, an optical connector adapter comprising "a pair of latch inserts located in the at least one passage" and a "spring loaded projection on the at least one latch insert being biased into the at least one detent locking the at least one latch insert to the housing."

*shown
to 24
25
single
holder*
Taira et al. disclose an optical connector adapter. In a first embodiment, the optical connector adapter 10 has a sleeve holder 20 and a housing 30 supporting the sleeve holder 20. (column 4, lines 8-10). Other embodiments are disclosed, including a sixth embodiment, shown in Fig. 15, which teaches use of multiple sleeve holders 20. However, each of the embodiments teaches use of a **single sleeve holder 20** for an optical connection. Taira et al. do not disclose or suggest an optical connector adapter having **more than one sleeve holder 20**. Taira et al. do not disclose or suggest a "pair of latch inserts" located in a passage, as is claimed in claim 1.

In fact, Taira, et al. teach that it is advantageous to have a connector adapter that is "reduced in the number of parts and improved in the accuracy of positioning" (column 2, lines 10-

11). Limiting "the number of parts" provides for "thus reducing cost" (column 7, lines 3-5). In each embodiment disclosed or suggested in Taira et al., only one sleeve holder 20 is used to form an optical connection. Therefore, it is considered that Taira et al. teach away from a "pair of latch inserts," as is claimed in claim 1.

Further, it is considered that invention of claim 1 is more than a mere duplication of parts. The specification provides:

"the receiving areas of the two latch inserts 14A, 14B are precisely aligned with each other by the one-piece outer housing 50 of the adapter. Hence, the opposing connectors inside the receiving area are also precisely aligned. This allows the ends of the connectors to be connected resulting in a connection of high-fidelity." (Page 16, line 32 - page 17, line 4).

Accordingly, it is considered that claim 1 is novel and patentable over Taira et al. Reconsideration and removal of the rejection of claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Though dependent claims 2, 4-7 and 9-11 contain their own allowable subject matter, these claims should be allowable at least on the basis of their dependence from allowable claim 1. However, to expedite prosecution, no further comment will be made herein.

The Examiner rejected claims 12-15 and 24 as being anticipated by Zimmell.

*suspect
-ferred lithically*

Claim 12 recites, in part, an optical adapter comprising "an outer housing, ... wherein the outer housing is a one-piece member." Claim 24 also recites that the outer housing "is a one piece member."

Zimmel discloses "adapter 10 contains a main housing 12 and an access plate or cover 14." (paragraph 0021). "Access opening 40 allows inner housing assembly 41 to be inserted into the axial cavity of main housing 12." This technique "allows main housing 12 to be constructed by injection molding." (paragraph 0023). Figures 1 and 2 of Zimmel provide further detail.

*applied
cover
rec'd
dr.*

Referring to Figure 2, it is clear that the cover 14 is a separate member. The cover 14 is "then placed over the opening 40" as a final step in assembly. (paragraph 0026).

Zimmel discloses certain aspects of alternative inner housing 41 embodiments. Common to these embodiments, are the two ledges 50 (paragraph 0024). Zimmel shows that by placing the inner housing assembly 41 through opening 40, the inner assembly 41 is positioned so that ledges 50 engage the opposing sides of inner wall 56. The cover 14 is then placed over the opening 40, so that inner walls 58 engage the ledges 50 of the assembled inner housing halves (paragraph 0026, Fig. 2). Accordingly, it is considered that Zimmel teaches a bulkhead adapter 10 wherein the access opening 40 (and therefore cover 14) is required for insertion of the inner assembly 41, the assembly 41 including ledges 50 for engaging with inner walls 58.

Contrary to the assertion of the Examiner, it is respectfully submitted that the foregoing shows that the housing 12 of Zimmel is not "a one-piece member," as is claimed in claims 12 and 24. Zimmel does not disclose or suggest a "one-piece member." Rather, it is considered that Zimmel teaches away from a main housing 12 that is "a one-piece member," as is claimed in claims 12 and 24. Claims 12 and 24 are considered novel and patentable over Zimmel. *hmv*

Further, regarding the rejections to claims 13, 14 and 15 it is respectfully suggested that the Examiner's interpretation of the structure in Zimmel is incorrect. That is, ridges 54 are not slidably interlocked with ledge 50 (paragraph 24). In fact, the cover 14 engages the ridge ends 55 and ledges 50, when placed over opening 40 (paragraph 26). The examiner's reference to Fig. 10 is not understood, as Zimmel only presents Figs. 1-8.

Further, and in regard to claim 24, claim 24 claims, in part, steps of "inserting a first inner housing,... securing the first inner housing to the outer housing,... inserting a second inner housing,... securing the second inner housing to the outer housing,... wherein the,... inner housings are inserted into the at least one passage through opposite ends of the at least one passage."

Zimmel makes it clear that the assembly 41 is inserted by being "placed into the axial cavity of the main housing 12 through opening 40" and that placing the cover secures "the assembled inner housing halves" (paragraph 26). Zimmel does not disclose or suggest an adapter 10 assembled by inserting and securing a first housing and then inserting and securing a second housing.

Zimmel does not disclose or suggest inserting the inner housing assembly 41 through the opposite ends of the adapter. Accordingly, and at least for these further reasons, claim 24 is novel and patentable over Zimmel.

Though dependent claims 13-15 and 25-26 contain their own allowable subject matter, these claims should be allowable at least on the basis of their dependence from one of allowable claims 12 or 24. However, to expedite prosecution at this time, no further comment will be made.

New claims 27-34 have been added. Support for these claims is found at least on page 8, page 14, and page 16 of the specification.

Also, please note that claims 12, 14, and 19-23 have been amended to address certain typographical errors. These amendments are clearly editorial, and do not affect the patentability of these claims. A typographical error appearing on page 16 of the specification is also amended herein.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record, and in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issue remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' Attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Application No.: 10/091,906
Art Unit: 2839

Respectfully submitted,



Ira M. Turner (Reg. No. 53,887)

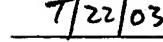
Harrington & Smith, LLP

4 Research Drive

Shelton, CT 06484

(203) 925-9400 extension 19

(203) 944-0245



Date

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail on the date shown below in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

7/22/2003
Date


Lynn Maroldi
Name of Person Making Deposit